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THE BOOKSHELF

CORONET

By MANUEL KOMROFF

One of the most talked-of books this year is *Coronet*, by the versatile Manuel Komroff. Although his name and appearance belie the fact, Manuel Komroff is a native American. An engineer, composer, painter, journalist, editor, motion picture and art critic, he has traveled extensively in Russia, China, and Japan. He is known as a writer of short stories, novels, and history. At the beginning of the Russian Revolution, he became editor of the *Russian Daily News* and held this position until the Bolsheviks came into power. Forced to leave at that time he crossed Siberia and worked for many months in China and Japan. It was this actual contact with the people of Russia and the Far East that made the local color of *Coronet* possible.

In this book, the author traces the history of a small gold crown from the time of its manufacture in Florence in 1600, through the period of Napoleon's expedition into Russia, up to the post-war days of 1919 when it finally ended up in the possession of a wealthy family in Chicago.

Each of the periods written about is separated by a long gap of years during which the coronet lies either hidden or in such a place that its power to cause strife is dormant. The story does not deal entirely with the history of the crown itself; in fact, one may read for pages and pages without its even being mentioned, but always it turns up again in an unexpected place, bringing with it more trouble.

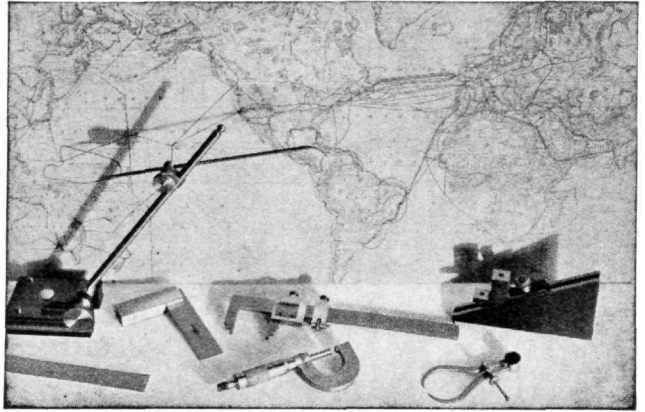
True history plays an important part in the story and is an indication of the author's extended knowledge of this subject. The history is interwoven with the plot in such a way as to make it intensely interesting and gripping. Komroff's keen insight into the human mind is ever apparent also, as he catches the moods and the inner thoughts of his characters, making them real to the reader. Truly it is a wonderful book. We recommend it highly to any reader.—R.M.E.

Erich Maria Remarque, author of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, has published a sequel under the title of *The Road Back*. It is the story of a group of war-weary, disillusioned German soldiers endeavoring to adjust themselves to peace conditions in a demoralized world.

Our old friend of high-school essay days, Stephen Leacock, is back again with *Wet Wit and Dry Humour*. It is a new collection of essays written in the famous Leacock style.

Considerable comment has been raised concerning the *Flying Dutchman*, which is an autobiography of Anthony H. G. Fokker, the airplane designer. It seems that because some of his remarks in the book were not exactly complimentary Admiral Byrd and some of Byrd's friends were rather upset.

MAY, 1931



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